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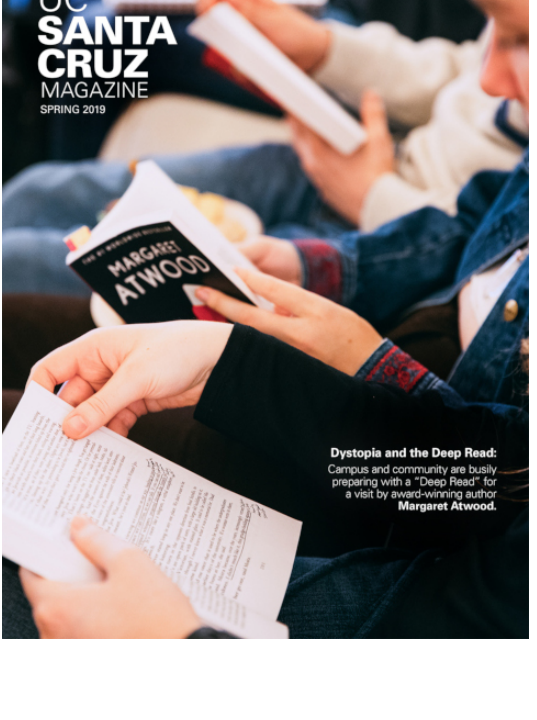
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# Initiating the next steps in our fire response - beginning next stages of voluntary evacuations

**To:** UC Santa Cruz Community  
**From:** Sarah Latham, Vice Chancellor, Business and Administrative Services

August 20, 2020

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As the conditions around Santa Cruz county worsen and the fires impacting our region continue to grow, we are now initiating several critical steps in our fire response. The Lightning Complex fire has now grown to approximately 40,000 acres and has zero containment. The evacuation zone continues to grow. Though UC Santa Cruz has not yet been warned to evacuate, it is critical we remain vigilant. Should a campus evacuation be necessary, a [CruzAlert](#) will be sent followed by an email with additional guidance. This could happen at any moment.

**Please heed ALL guidance.** The CruzAlert will outline the actions to take and the evacuation location to report to.

### Initiating the next stage of voluntary on-campus evacuations

We have been encouraging all those who live on campus to proactively leave if they have a safe location to relocate to out of the area. It is critical that we continue to do so to decrease the number of people on campus that will have to be evacuated if and when a mandatory evacuation is issued for our campus. It also decreases pressure points on roadways. There are already numerous roadway closures in the area. So we ask the following:

- **If you live on campus (both students and employees) and have a safe place to go, we ask that you relocate now.**
- If you live on campus and do not have an alternative location to evacuate to, we have staged the Santa Cruz Boardwalk area as the official evacuation location for those who live on campus and have nowhere else to go. As space is limited, we need to prioritize that population for use of this evacuation location. Beginning at 2:00 pm today, those campus residents who do not have alternative evacuation locations can begin to relocate there. At this point the evacuation is voluntary, but at any moment the campus evacuation could become mandatory. Check in at this site will take place at Entrance B across from the Parking Lot at the Boardwalk. Campus officials will direct you on next steps once you arrive. Additional information with useful tips and information on transportation will be coming out from campus housing to our students and employees who live on campus. Please ensure you have a University ID or other form of identification with you if you relocate to the UC Santa Cruz evacuation location.
- If you do not live on campus, please follow the evacuation orders and directions provided by first responders for your exact location.
- County and fire officials advise that people who have to evacuate the area may not be able to return to their homes through the end of August or potentially the first week in September. Individual circumstances will differ, but keep this in mind when you are evacuating.

***Once an evacuation order becomes mandatory, the campus will declare a campus emergency. At that point, evacuations are not voluntary.***

### Beginning the shut down of key campus systems and infrastructure:

As a precautionary safety step, we will start shutting down several campus systems in preparation for an active fire on the residential campus. This is referred to as “hardening the campus”. Once that process is complete and as conditions warrant, some of these actions could be taken at our other Santa Cruz locations. This includes:

1. **Shutting down the Cogen.** We will be powering down the campus Cogeneration plant starting at 2:00 pm. The campus will then be operating solely on PGE power. If we have a PG&E power outage, those buildings that have backup emergency generators will still have some portions of their operations supported.
2. **Shutting down natural gas:** We will begin shutting down natural gas to all buildings on campus. This will impact operations that are powered by natural gas, such as hot water. Natural gas fed to emergency generators will not be shut off. This activity will start around 1:00 pm. We are focusing on non-residential buildings first, but can not predict exactly when each building on campus will be shut off.
3. **Fire and smoke barrier door closure:** We will be closing all doors that are part of the fire and smoke barriers in all buildings. If you are onsite in buildings please close these doors and do not open them back up.
4. **Minimizing the electrical load:** We will begin shutting down all unnecessary power loads. This includes lighting, HVAC, chillers, and boilers. This does not apply to life safety systems or other critical or sensitive loads such as chemical storage.

### Other key updates and actions

If you do not have to come to campus to support these critical operations and fire response, do not come to campus. This only adds to the challenges we face in supporting the prompt and efficient evacuation of our residents on campus.

Please be prepared for a quick evacuation whether you live on campus or in the region. An emergency can strike quickly and advance notice may be very brief. Please continue to follow the Red Cross evacuation preparation guidance. More information can be found on the Red Cross Wildfire Safety [website](#).

- Be ready in a moment’s notice; be sure to pack belongings such as clothing, non-perishable foods for you and your service or support animal if you have one, medications and copies of important documents.
- If you have not already done so, sign up for or update your UCSC Cruz Alert notifications [here](#) -- this is among the most effective means for receiving urgent campus-specific information and updates. Updates may also be found [here](#).
- Listen to local radio and television stations for updated emergency information.
- More information can be found on the Red Cross Wildfire Safety [website](#).

Continue to follow COVID-19 prevention best practices, including wearing a face covering and physical distancing.

Continue to check our fire update [webpage](#) for additional information.

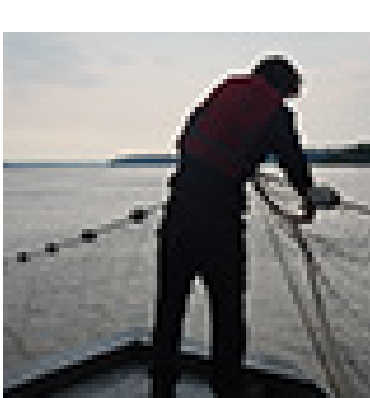
Residents who would like to receive email updates from CalFire can opt-in [here](#).

Thank you for your cooperation as we undertake these critical steps.


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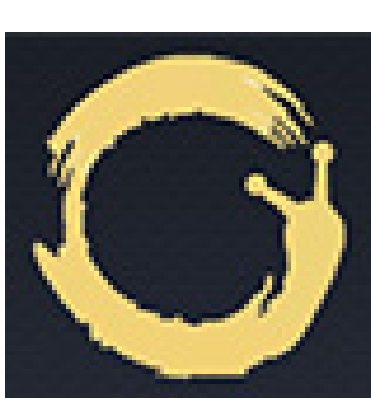
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